expressed the hope that the Kashmir issue would be resolved peacefully through negotiations between Pakistan and India on the basis of international agreements.

(b) The Russian Federation have since conveyed to Government that their position on Kashmir remains the same as that of the former USSR.

Influx of Bhutani Refugees in Darjeeling

2753. SHRI RATNABAHADUR RAI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the influx of refugees from Bhutan to Doars area of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal since the last two years; and

(b) if so, what are the details of steps being taken for the supply of necessary relief to them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAYSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government are aware of the influx of persons from Bhutan to the Doars area of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal.

(b) Most of these persons are staying with their friends and relatives in the tea gardens/ adjoining areas of Jajpaiguri district. Government are not comtemplating the supply of relief to them.

Iranian offer for resolving India Pakistan issues

2754. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Iranian Ambassador to India had offered the good offices of his country to mediate between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir question;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) whether the Iranian Government have taken any initiative in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) Government are aware of some reports in this regard, During bilateral exchanges at various levels, there have been some suggestions from Iranian leaders and officials that Iran was willing to assist with the resolution of India's problems with Pakistan, should this offer be of interest to India. Government have reiterated their cosistent position that all differences with Pakistan are to be resolved bilaterally under the Simla Agreement and there can be no scope for outside or third party involvement of any sort.

New Maritime Strategy Cooperation Plan

2755. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has in the context of the new international equations evolved any Maritime Strategy Co-operation Plan with the Indian Ocean Littoral States with a view to promote national interests;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what is India's present thinking on this crucial issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) Due to their diversity of perceptions and interests a common maritime strategy or plan amongst the littoral states is not feasible at present. However, government are alive to developments which could affect our maritime and other interests, and, to this and, support cooperative efforts with interested countries in the area.

Compensation to refugees from Bangladesh

2756. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have been pursuing the question of settlement of compensation to refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) with its counterpart in Bangladesh;

(b) if so, what is the progress made in the matter; and

(c) whether the present Government of

Bangladesh have made favourable response to our approaches for settlement of the issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Bangladesh have maintained that the question of settlement of compensation of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan would have to await the settlement of the assets and liabilities issue between Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Difficulties being faced by Punjabi Poet in the matter of passport

2757. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaint of harassment of a renowned Punjabi Poet of village Vattu-Chak, P.O. Dhilwan (Kapurthala), Punjab relating to his passport No. 10/ 88408/81/PL section issued by Jalandhar Passport Office; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to and the harassment of the said writer who is crusading against terrorism and separatism?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. A complaint was received that passport of Shri Harbhajan Singh Hundal was seized by Senior Superintendent of Police, Kapurthala, Punjab.

(b) The complaint has been forwarded to the Punjab Government for redressal of grievences of Shri Hundal.

Talks with Iraq for settlement of dues of Indian workers

2758. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have taken up with the Government of Iraq the issue of settlement of dues of Indian workers who were working in that country with Messers Anice Construction Service Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that representatives from EXIM Bank and E.C.G.C. are holding discussions with the Central Bank of Iraq on the above issue; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the progress made in the discussions?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. We have taken up with Iraq the question of payment of its dues to our companies.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Iraq has indicated that it is in no position to pay its dues until petroleum exports are resumed.

हज यात्री

@2759. **डा० अबरार अहमद:** क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या हज यात्रियों के लिए सभी तैयारियां पूरी कर ली गई हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उन व्यक्तियों की संख्या कितनी है जिनकी इस हज यात्रा पर जाने की संभावना है, कितनी विदेशी मुद्रा की मंजूरी दी जाने की संभावना है और उनकी ठहरने संबंधी व्यवस्था पर कितनी धनराशि व्यय की जाएगी;

(ग) हज यात्रियों में से कितनों की समुद्री जहाज द्वारा यात्रा करने तथा कितने हज यात्रियों की वायुयान द्वारा यात्रा करने की संभावना है; और

(घ) क्या सरकार को इस कार्य में लगी प्राईवेट कम्पनियों की जानकारी है, यदि हां, तो उनका ब्यौरा क्या है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री माधवसिंह सोलंकी) (क) और (ख) जी नहीं। तैयारियां चल रही हैं। लगभग 35000 लोग भारत से हज यात्रा पर जाते हैं जिनमें से 24,000 लोगों के लिए प्रबंध हज समिति, बम्बई के

@ पृथक्, अतारांकित प्रश्न 1566, 6 मार्च, 1992 से स्थानान्तरित।